BLUE GRASS BLADE

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High and Ashland East Side

PRIESTHOOD

Its Birth and Life and Hold Upon the Destinies of the World

(By Judge Parish B. Ladd.)

From the silent ages of the bygone and the living records of our time, we gather the facts concerning the birth and life of the world's priesthood. Under the various names, such as the medicine man, the augur, the soothsayer, the sorcerer, the diviner, the juggler, the kohen, the rabbi, the clergyman, the minister, the pulpiteer, all are but so many different names belonging to and coming under the general appellation or designation of priest.

Under such names they have held in their grasp the destinies of the world—a body of men, who are the makers of all the gods,, religious and sacred books, which, from the remotest antiquity, have crushed the human race. All of this class have ever claimed to be the accredited agents of their gods, with power to call down the wrath or pleasure of their heavenly monarchs on the heads of a world's believers or unbelievers.

On numerous occasions heretofore I have, to some extent, given details of this clerical plant, the rise, criminal life and progress of the priestly hierarchy, which took its rise with the Essenes and Therapeuts some 200 years before the time assigned to the mythical Christ, was continued without change of principles when these societies threw off their old titles and merged in one body under the name, Christian, about the 140 of our vulgar era; from and after that date the sect has been known as Christian, meaning a collection or association of pious men, worshippers for a time of the Hebrew God Jehovah; lastly three gods—Jehovah; his son, the good, personified to represent a man called Christ, to which was added the prefix, **Jesus the Savior**; the two words when spoken together originally meant to be good (meaning holy), is salvation. The Holy Ghost, meaning wind or breath of Jehovah, being finally added to make a trinity, which all the pagans had.

The scope of this thesis will be limited to findings of fact and general deductions therefrom, from the birth of Christianity to the present time. For the proof of such findings and conclusions, I refer the reader to my numerous writings along this line.

The Christian priesthood is a thing unto itself; it finds in the world's history no parallel. Religion is as old as primitive man on earth; its foundation was ignorance—ignorance of the laws of nature; from this ignorance came fear, which is the foundation of all religion. Among all the earth's inhabitants, no animal other than man was ever so stupid as to have a religion. Instinct and the so-called low order of reasoning of inanimate nature, before man, was sufficient to impress them that an appeal to higher powers brought no results; nor would primitive man ever have thought otherwise except for the importunities of the priesthood, who have ever been the bane of the world.

The beasts of the fields, the fowls of the air, and even the fishes of the sea, instinctively know the useless waste of prayer—a call on the immutable powers of nature for favors. Supreme Nature, who moves under fixed laws, without thought, purpose or design, heeds no word, act or wish of man, or any other animal.

Man, the most cruel, and least wise in this respect, arrogant and supine as a zoological primate, seeing Nature's blind, purposeless forces around him, took them for supreme beings, or the hidden spirits of celestial powers above the earth, of which he was a less potent type. He, in his primitive ignorance, has thus created the first gods, being the producers of the phenomena around him, he appealed to them for protection from harm. Thus we have the origin of religion.

At this stage of the primate's life, the more crafty, seeing their opportunity for gain, assumed to intervene between these heavenly powers and their clients, for the protection of the latter from the wrath of the former. In dreadful fear of the direful elements, this stupid primate readily assented to the will and wishes of the intervener and to pay tribute for his services. Thus we have the origin of the priesthood, and its dupes, men and women of little capacity, who give implicit faith and heed to their priests, who, in the morn of life, as now, have ever sought to keep their votaries in ignorance, that they, (the priests) may profit thereby.

Of the tribes and peoples of the ancient world, each had worked out for itself, its own gods and a hierarchy of priests as divine agents. While man, as a mere animal, was allowed to establish civil rules of government, he must in no wise trench on the reserved powers of the priesthood, which came directly from heaven.

In the religious world, as thus made up, each tribe and people made its own gods, always in the image of the maker.

This being conceded as a natural right, the many pagan systems respected the gods and religions of all others, as in the Roman Empire, when it allowed the gods of the Etruscans and Grecians to be set up in its own cities. By this toleration, all the religions moved on, side by side, in unison and harmony, as one stupendous whole. Under such provisions there could be no quarreling. The religious world was at peace with itself and all mankind.

Such was the state of things at the time of the birth of Christianity and the rise of its priesthood, when a new era, one of strife and terror was ushered in. The peace and harmony of the old pagan world was to be supplanted by a long reign of strife, terror, torture, poverty, death, decline of learning, and the loss of civilization. In a word, for fourteen hundred years the world was to groan and suffer under the despotic rule and ruin of the Christian priesthood.

Christianity, in the morn of its life, drew all of its recruits from the lowest of the low. Beggars, thieves, outcasts, old women and children, all of the most ignorant class, entered its fold, and became the life of the system—despised and held in contempt by the scholars, and even by the pagans of the Roman Empire. As such people then, and at all times, have constituted a large majority of our race, the accessions to the ranks of Christianity were very rapid.

Let it here not be forgotten that many of the ancient philosophers and civil rulers deemed (as such do today) that religion of some kind was necessary to curb the passions and hold the multitude in subjection. On this theory, non-believers have loaned, and now loan, their influence to the support of the prevailing superstition.

From the very start these Christian cattle, with the priests at their head, denounced all the other religions of the world as false, vile and pernicious, unworthy of fellowship, and enemies of the true God, who being a consolidation of the three in one, demanded exclusive worship from all mankind; that it was their duty to force all to submit to Christianity and obey the dictates of the priests.

These claims, as was natural, arrayed all the rest of the world against the new sect, and even antagonized the different Christian sects against each other, for at a very early date a diversity of opinion, represented by different sects, had grown up, each claiming to be the true orthodoxy. It was between these different sects that the early Christians waged their first wars—conflicts to determine which was orthodox and which was heterodx. In these sanguinary conflicts, the weaker party, or at least their leaders, were either put to death or banished. Often these quarrel became so sanguinary as to involve the slaughter of whole communities. At times, the majority shifted from side to side, when the weaker went down to death as a penalty for their attempt to differ with the majority. Nor was it of rare occurrence that the minority at one time became the majority at another, depending on the opinion of the civil ruler, or that of a Bishop. In this way an incessant war was kept up between the different factions from the earliest times down to the close of the first quarter of the third century, when Constantine, the pagan Emperor, called on the warring factions to meet in convention and settle their differences.

This call resulted in the famous Nicene Council, which settled the New Testament canon, at least for a time, and gave to the Christian world the Athanasian Creed, a jargon of meaningless words, which has since been the standard of orthodoxy, a dissent from which, being heresy, the priesthood at all times and in all countries since the adoption of creed, have, as far as in their power, tortured and put to death all dissenters.

On Jews, scholars and witches the vials of priestly wrath have been poured out without stint, nor have other dissenters escaped the terrible fate of torture and death at the hands of the priesthood of Christianity. In all this, since the so-called Reformation, the priests of both Catholics and Protestants have vied with each other in these persecutions. Both have used the same instruments of torture, each trying to outdo the other in its cruelties and the number of its victims. In each case it is the hell-born priest standing on the authority of his Bible of forgeries,—a book that will go down to posterity as the source of more crimes than have ever been committed by any or every other authority. Read the blood-curdling stories of the Old Testament; the New Testament is a little better.

Of the 1,400,000,000 of human beings of our world, less than 300,000,000 are claimed to be Christians. Of this number, only about one-half belong to the several churches, leaving 1,100,000,000 who are ruled to a greater or less extent by other priests. If we extract from this 300,000,000 the children and the feeble-minded who are not capable of forming correct opinions, and those who use the old ox-cart of Christianity to haul their gods, wares and products to market, a few lone ciphers would represent the real believers.

It may seem strange that a priesthood of so small a number have for more than 1,400 years been able to dominate all Christendom, the fairest portion of earth; but the fact exists all the same, to be accounted for on the ground of united action and the determined and desperate character of the priesthood.

After countless ages of religious harmony among the numerous pagan religions of the world, it was left to the priesthood of a miserable bantling to be the first to persecute, torture, mutilate, and finally put to death all who dared call in question the absurd story of the Christian religion,—conception, birth of a child, resurrection of the dead, all of which are physical impossibilities, violations of the well-known immutable laws of nature,—hence absurd and ridiculous when viewed from a rational standpoint by men of letters.

The building up of a great system of religion on such a flimsy basis is conclusive proof that the material used by the priesthood is, intellectually, a little above that possessed by the quadrumana. The true, devout believers of Christianity have at all times been of this class. In this respect, mere nominal believers, who support the creed as a financial venture, are not counted, nor are the more thoughtful and intelligent of the priesthood to be counted as a part of the cattle who follow their leaders.

It is the lives and doings of the wily, cunning, artful, sly order of the priesthood that have called up this discussion.

The quarrels and slaughter heretofore referred to among the Christian sects were only a prelude of what was to follow when the system came into power under Constantine in the fourth century. As children of the second, third and fourth centuries, they spent their forces in slaughtering their own, for the civil power of Rome did not allow them to murder outsiders; but when the sect got into power under Constantine, the whole order of things was changed; the priesthood was master; the emperor and later the kings were forced servants. The Christian world was an hierarchy, to be ruled by priests, with the Pope at their head. It was a concentrated power under unscrupulous leaders; the will of the priesthood knew no bounds; its word ruled all Christendom; that word was uttered by the Pope; the civil powers moved at his bidding; he made and deposed kings and emperors at will; the civil powers, though non-Christian, dared not incur his ill-will. In short, the Pope by the aid of the priesthood, ruled all Europe and a part of Asia and Africa.

During a thousand years, known as the Dark Ages, the Pope and his priests succeeded in blotting out every vestige of civilization; libraries were burned; colleges and other schools closed; the few books that were permitted related to the church and its priests; no writings other than such as supporte the church were allowed; the old Grecian and Roman classics had ceased to exist, except such as were concealed, or had found their way to Arabia and other Saracen lands. The printing press had not been invented; the few books extant could only be reproduced by the slow process of writing.

Under this state of things it is no wonder that the world of Christendom grew dark, and that the darkness became more intense as time went on. The inevitable followed; poverty, piety and crime were fellow travellers. The priesthood, its Pope and church, were all in all, except in Arabia and other lands under Mohammedan rule, where the old classics had been reproduced in translation.

In the place of literature, prosperity and civilization, the priesthood substituted prayer, poverty and crime,—crime on crime untold,—all committed by the Pope and his priests on unbelievers, which included every variety of opinion out of harmony with the dictates of the Pope and his priesthood. To enforce the hell-born dictum of this hierarchy every instrument which human ingenuity could invent was brought into requisition, not only to torture, but to prolong the suffering of the victims, such as the thumb-screw, iron boot, iron rack for breaking bones, and other devices too numerous to mention. As to the kinds of punishment, among them was cutting off noses, carving out tongues, hanging by the neck or heels until half dead, then taking the victim down and cutting out his heart, liver and lungs, or burning him to death over a slow fire; sometimes hanging the victims, both men and women, up by the heels over a fire until half dead, then cutting them down to prolong their agony as much as possible before final burning; sometimes women and young girls had poles thrust into their privates and thus carried along the streets until exhausted, when faggots and fire were applied to finish this priestly hellish work.

These descriptions are only a few of the many such devices and means used by the priesthood to make Christians out of unbelievers, to which, let it be said, the army was at times, especially under Charlemagne, resorted to, when whole tribes and peoples were converted at one single stroke. Once so converted, death by fire or burial alive was the fate of all who dared renounce the new faith.

The number so put to death no one will ever know. Various estimates place the number of

(Continued on Page 4).

BIBLE

What It Is a Question That Cannot Be Answered Intellegently

(By C. E. Johnson.)

The Bible,—what is it? is the question that has agitated the mind of thinking man for generations past, and not until the last century has man so boldly spoken his thoughts and sentiments concerning this great stock of nonsensical ignorance, which bleating sky-pilots would cram dodwn poor, ignorant fools with a four-tined pitchfork, so as to enable him to fill his own pouch with grub and gravy.

Yes, the Bible—what is it? Should the question be answered correctly, it would disgustingly sicken the stomach of a carcass-eating buzzard.

Viewing the contents of the Bible, page at a time, would be like examining, piece-meal, the partly-devoured carcass of a rhinoceros. Oh, the horror! The stench! The filth, that this divine (?) book contains is probably the reson why so many righteous Reverendsd bask in the holy sunshine of immorality. You can any day pick up the daily papers and read column after column of sensational scandals of preachers and priests, who have re-enacted the immoralities of David with some adventuress of misfortune. The little escapade of Lot's laughters with their old drunken sot of a father certainly is moral literature for young and immature minds.

And yet when I read the 38th chapter of Genesis, with its disgusting filthy language, explaining the little circumstance of Onan, I wonder why people place this book before their children as a guide. It is no wonder that prostitutes have overrun the land.

Should I write the 36th chapter and 12th verse of Isaiah on a post-card and send it through the United States mail, I would be prosecuted for sending obscene literature through the mails.

It certainly would be great to have the little novelette, the Book of Ruth, printed in tracts and passed around to Sunday-School children, so they will be sure to read how Ruth's passion led her to crawl into bed with her cousin. Oh, is this not moral literature! You old, ignorant fathers and mothers, why do you place the old book reeking with immoral filth into the clean, pure hands of your daughters? Do you wish to educate them into the slums of prostitution, by using the Bible as a text-book?

I refuse to accept the Bible as a moral guide when it teaches obscenity, adultery and prostitution; also polygamy, slavery, cannibalism, witchcraft, human sacrifices, murder, wars of conquest, cheating, lying and deception, theft and robbery, intemperance, vagrancy, ignorance, injustice to women, unkindness to children, cruelty to animals, tyranny, intolerance and persecution.

Abraham had two wives, and when he died the Lord said: "Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws." (Gen. 26-5).

Jacob was a polygamist, and after he had secured four wives and concubines, God blessed him and said: "Be fruitful and multiply." (Gen. 35-11.)

David had a score of wives and concubines, and "David was a man after God's own heart;" "David did right in the eyes of the Lord." God said to David: "I delivered thee out of the hands of Saul; and I gave thee thy master's house and thy master's wives." (2 Sam. 12-78.)

Adultery is made prominent by the numerous adulteries of Abraham, David and Jacob.

The South derived its reason for slavery from the New Testament, by Paul sending back a Christian servant who had run away from his Christian master

"Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the forward." (1 Pet. 2-18.)

"Exhort servants to be obedient unto their masters." (Titus 2-9.)

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor." (1 Tim. 6-1).

And we find that the Jewish Scriptures also sanctioned slavery: "And if the servant shall plainy say, I love my master, my wife, my children; I will not go out free; then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him unto the door or unto the door-post; and his master shall bore his ears through with an awl; and he shall serve him forever." (Exo. 21-24.)

What is it more horrible than human sacrifices?

God commands Abraham to sacrifice his son: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering." (Gen. 22-2.)

Those desiring further information on this horrible practice might read Jud. 11-26:40; 2 Sam. 21.

You talk about heathens and barbarians! What is this? Is it cannibalism? "The fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee and the sons shall eat their fathers." (Ezek. 5-10.)

"And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat." (Lev. 26-29.)

"And I will cause them to eat the flesh of their sons and the flesh of their daughters, and they shall eat every one the flesh of friend." (Jer. 19-9.)

"And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters*** So that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil toward his brother, and toward the wife of his bosom, and toward the servant of his children, whom he shall eat** The tender and delicate women among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son and toward her daughter, for she shall eat them." (Deut. 28-53, 57.)

"Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." (John 6-53.)

The Christian sacrament points to the time when savage priests gathered around and dined on human flesh, and wined and supped on human blood.

I do not accept the Bible as a moral guide, because it teaches witchcraft. It was through its teachings that the witch-fires burned in Europe for centuries, and nine millions of people went to their deaths just because the Bible says: "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live." (Exo. 22-18.)

"A man also, or a woman, that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death." (Lev. 20 27.)

A book that is set up to lead people as a moral guide, whose God is a murderer and a guiding hand in a number of foul murders, should be classed as fiction, and the sacred veil torn from its countenance and expose in all its horrible nakedness.

"Spare them not, but slay them both man and woman, infant and suckling." (1 Sam. 15-3.)

"Slay both old and young, maids and little children." (Ezekiel 9-6.)

"Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood." (Jer. 38-10.)

God's chosen leader for his children was a premeditated murder-

(Continued on Page 4.)

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LINCOLN'S RELIGION.

We again desire to calll the attention of our readers to the article of Dr. Wilson on "Lincoln's Religion," which we proposed to put in pamphlet, to be distributed free.

We are holding the type, and will await further expression on the subject before tearing it down. It seems to us that this pamphlet should be put out. Dr. Wilson proposes to add considerable important evidence to it. We will print ten thousand copies for $120. They will be given free—the only charge being that of postage, one cent each—and will be sent to whomsoever you may name. Say you want to send a copy each to ten persons. All you have to do is to send us the names and addresses of the ten persons, and enclose ten one-cent stamps, and we will mail at once.

Now, in order to make this free distribution, we must be secured by donations in advance. We have had a great many letters from people saying they would like from 10 to 100 pamphlets as soon as they came out, but only a few offers of donations. This we believe due to those inclined to give, waiting to see what others intend doing. We should have started off with a subscription list in the first place, and will do this now. Dr. Wilson will give $5.00, and a modest reader, who does not care for his name to be known, will give $10.00. So we start off with these:

Dr. J. B. Wilson......	$5.00
A Friend	10.00

Let us have a response at once, no matter how small it may be.

Did you overlook the pink slip in the Blade last week? Somebody did. This question is one of tremendous importance to us. You may think your arrearage of of a dollar is a small thing. Yours is as big as the other man's, and together they are very big to us. You may think the others will send theirs, and we won't need yours. We need yours worse than we do theirs, because they are waiting for you to send yours before they send theirs. Perhaps you have forgotten it. That's bad—for us. Look it up, and send it now.

When people who profess a religion do not believe in it themselves, the natural result is, the eventual precipitation of social chaos.

Christianity is played out; it is an unmitigated evil, and what is worse, it is a hindrance to anything better taking its place to enlighten and educate the people.

At best man has but a few years to live, and he strives hard to waste them by indulging in religion and politics. Both are evils that will go glimmering when man comes into his senses. Until then we must keep up the fight against both superstitions.

Many men may believe that they believe the dodgmas of the Christian faith, but if they will carefully examine their own minds they will be forced to the conclusion that there is, after all, a great big doubt lurking behind it. To believe in such doctrines as are promulgated by the present day church is an outrage upon the very intelligence of which they so perisistently boast.

Common School is the breath of life. I tell you the school house is the fortress of liberty. As I have said ten thousand times, the school house is my cathedral. the teacher is my preacher. The United States spends over $2.50 per pupil in the public schools; Italy spends 25 cents. In the United States 110 letters for each individual are passing through the postoffices; in Italy only 16 letters. *** And this is the place where God's agent lives! I would rather have one school house than two such agents.

We must develop the brain, civilize the heart, and, above all things, we must not forget education from early days. Nothing should be taught in the school that somebody does not know.—Ingersoll.

ADDRESS

Delivered at the Funeral of Mrs. Malinda Nauman, December 20, 1909.

(By Henry F. Wagner.)

Friends:—

We are assembled on an occasion of mournful interest. We have come here to pay the last tribute of respect to our kind friend and good neighbor, and to the devoted wife and cherished mother of these dear loved ones whom she has left to mourn her untimely death.

Death, though certain, yet is often unexpected, and in the case of this good woman whose frail form lies mute in our presence, with the light of the eye now dimmed, with the lips which have oft so kindly spoken warm and friendly greetings, now hushed, and with the warm heart that has oft throbbed for others woes now stilled. It seems that in this instance death was more sudden and more unexpected than is usual, and that it is not the ordinary, but the extraordinary thing that has happened to remove this good woman from our midst. Two weeks ago last evening, I sat here in this house, visiting with her and her cherished family, and she was so jovial, and I not knowing anything of her affliction, we pleasantly talked for an hour or so, and when I left, I was, as usual, warmly and courteously invited to come again; but little did I then think that I had looked upon her smiling countenance for the last time, and that we had spoken the last words that should pass between us. So I say in all truth and candor that her death was untimely and her friends and loved ones mourn.

Here today in this house of mourning, we view a striking instance of the uncertainty of life and the vanity of all human pursuits. We can in no way be of any further benefit or assistance to the deceased. The last offices paid to the dead are only useful as lectures to the living; from them we are to derive instruction and consider every solemnity of this kind as a summons to prepare for our own approaching dissolution. Notwithstanding the various mementoes of mortality with which we daily meet, notwithstanding death has established his empire through all the works of nature, yet through some unaccountable infatuation, we forget that we are born to die. We go on from one design to another, add hope to hope, and lay out plans for employment of many years, until we are suddenly alarmed by the approach of Death, when we least expect him, and in this at an hour which we probably conclude to be the meridian of our existence.

To every person on this earth death cometh, soon or late. Wealth cannot bribe him to stay away; rank and power cannot shield us from him; no strength of mortal arm can bar his onward march. He alone is no respector of persons. The ruddiest cheek pales before his breath; the stoutest heart ceases to beat at his touch; the strongest frame bows and falls before him. As he moves swiftly and silently by among the ranks of men, he lays on one and on another his chilling hand, and they fall on either side lifeless and cold.

Death comes naturally. We have no choice about our coming into the world, and likewise have no choice about our leaving it. Life is a process of natural development. Death is the culmination of this natural development. And the happy thing about this life is, that we know not when it will be terminated. And so this good woman has met with the common fate which must befall all humanity. The high and the low, the rich and the poor, the learned and the unlearned, all, all must meet on this common level.

Malinda Schreyer was born in Clear Creek township, Keokuk county, Iowa, June 19, 1872. She lost her mother in childhood, and was raised to maturity by her aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Goeldner. She was united in marriage to L. O. Nauman Dec. 3, 1891.. To this union were born two children, Freeda and Ernest. She died on December 17, 1909, in the midst of her usefulness, when the sun of her destiny had scarcely reached the noon hour, leaving two fond brothers, her two loving children, her devoted husband and a host of warm and true friends to mourn her loss. She was a woman, kind, loving and generous. In cases of sickness and death she always offered her assistance. She realized that she had been left helpless when a child and was lovingly cared for by others, and she was always willing to help others in like circumstances. Let us profit by her example and do unto her loved ones, left in their affliction, as she would have been inclined to do unto ours under like circumstances.

As we carry her body to its last resting place in the silent city of the dead, let us bear in mind only her virtues, which were many. The reward of a useful and virtuous life is the conviction that our memory will be cherished by those who come after us as we revere the memory of those who have gone before us, and as we deposit her body in the tomb, and drop the tear of sympathy in the grave, let charity incline us to remember that while she has passed beyond the need of those kindly benefactions we owe each other in life, yet she still holds a place in our memory and love, and that we can manifest that love by sympathy and continued benefactions to the kind, indulgent and devoted husband and the darling daughter and doting son who must now be reared to womanhood and manhood without the aid and assistance of a mother's wise caution and a mother's beneficent love. Let each one of us endeavor to so live in the way and manner so beautifully expressed by the poet, William Cullen Bryant, when he said:

"So live, that when thy summons come to join the innumerable caravan that moves to those mysterious realms where each must take his chamber in the silent halls of death, thou go, not like the quarry slave at night, scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave, like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him and lies down to pleasant dreams."

AT THE GRAVE.

Kind Friends: In silence on her bosom, nature receives both the good and the great, the one who lived and died by faith, and the one who in reason found his guide. Belief to her is no virtue, unbelief no crime; whether orthodox or heterodox, it is all the same, and as each and all lie down to that eternal rest—her boon to all mankind—they meet with naught but her calm indifference. The pomp and pride of life stop here; rank and station have found their end; social distinctions no further go, and all the barriers built in life between man and man, whether from the diversity of thought, from race, riches, or religion, here vanish forever in the "silent city of the dead." Perfect equality now prevails. The storms of passion, the ambitions and rivalry, the hopes and the tears which come to the living shall never again disturb her.

"The idea of immortality, that like a sea has ebbed and flowed in the human heart with its countless waves of hope and fear beating against the shores and rocks of time and fate, was not born of any book, nor of any religion. It was born of human affection, and it will continue to ebb and flow beneath the mists and clouds of doubt and darkness as long as love kisses the lips of death. It is the rainbow hope shining upon the tears of grief."

We now consign the body of this loved one to the grave, that with the lapse of time the law may be fulfilled, and while we do so with reverence and respect, with sorrow and regret, all fear is absent, for nowhere has nature inspired any. In her trust, and with perfect confidence, we now give back her own, and to all that remains of this once dear neighbor and affectionate sister, we now bid a long and last farewell—Farewell!

DEATH OF A. J. SENOUR.

Again the silent agent of change, which man calls death, has taken from us a good and noble son of mental freedom. On March 17, 1910, Mr. A. J. Senour, at his home near Independence, Kenton County, Ky., lapsed into the sleep eternal. Honored by all, hated by none, this good man has been a Freethinker for years, having years since turned out of the dark and narrow path of orthodoxy into the fertile and blossoming fields of reason.

A short while before Mr. Senour died, he called to his bed his youngest son, Doctor O. E. Senour, of Union, Boone County, Ky., to whom he stated that he realized the end was near, and as he had long been a Freethinker, he wanted his funeral services to be held in strict accordance with Freethought principles. It was his request that Dr. J. B. Wilson, of Cincinnati, O., deliver the funeral address, and in case the doctor was unable to attend, that his (Mr. Senour's) oldest grandchild, J. A. Culbertson, of Pittsburgh, make the address. Arrangements were made with Dr. Wilson, and on Sunday morning, March 20, 1910, the funeral services were held in the Courthouse at Independence, Ky. The Courthouse was crowded to its full capacity, as Mr. Senour was a man of many friends, respected by all who knew him. The Dr. talked for about one hour, expounding the principles of Freethought. The audience gave marked attention, and no doubt many found in the Doctor's remarks food for thought, which will be of benefit to them for years to come.

Mr. Senour had long hoped that as his last great service for the cause of intellectual liberty, that his funeral could be made the occasion for getting before the public the principles of Freethought. He understood that the orthodox are seldom prone to lend an ear to words that argue against their cherished superstitions, but are ever ready to silence a tongue that voices honest skepticism. However, he understood that on occasions of funerals the pious listen with a tremble, and for that reason he wished the opportunity which his death would afford to be taken advantage of, and his wishes were respected.

Mr. Senour's funeral was no doubt the first strictly Freethought funeral ever held in that neighborhood. Other Freethinkers have died, several recently, but their wishes and beliefs were not respected, the ghoulish hand of orthodoxy, in its eagerness to rule the dead as well as the living, making itself felt in such instances.

After the services were over, a number of persons came to Dr. Wilson and made it known that they were in accord with what he said, and that his words were freighted with much truth. And could Mr. Senour know the apparent good for the cause of the emancipation of the mind that his funeral service has worked, he would no doubt consider that he did not live and die in vain.

Mr. Senour was 72 years of age, and is survived by one brother, Mr. Timothy Senour, aged 74, seven children, three sons and four daughters, eleven grandchildren and one great-grandson.

In Independence cemetery, by the side of his beloved wife, who preceded him into the great beyond some two years ago, out where the golden rays of an impartial sun kiss to life and fragrance nature's flowers, where bird and song, vine and blossoms, immaculate snows and sublime quietness reign supreme, he was returned to the bosom of Mother Earth, the great crucible, where a few years hence all must meet on a common level of equality.

Peace be with him!

J. ATWOOD CULBERTSON.

"Half the world doesn't know how the other half lives."

"Possibly," answered Miss Cayenne. "But that isn't the fault of the ladies who get together with their knitting in our hotel."—Washington Star.

Generous.

The Doctor—"Mrs. Murphy, you must be at your husband's side constantly, as you will need to hand him something constantly."

Mrs. Murphy—"Niver, doctor! Fur be it from me to hit a man whin he's down."—Puck.

Conditions Hostile.

Pat—"We sure do need rain, parson.'

Priest—"That's what we do. I'll remember it in my prayer tonight at the meetin'.

Pat—"'T won't do any good, parson, as long as the wind's in the west."

She Spoke Truth.

"I am undone!" shrieked the Tragedy Queen, as she threw her arms upward with a wild gesture.

"Yes," agreed the Villain, as he stole a surreptitious glance behind her back, "two buttons at the top and three at the bottom."

Intelligent Domestic.

Servant: "There is no coal, mum, an' the fire is goin' out."

Mistress: "Why, Norah, you should have told me that before."

Servant: "I couldn't have told you there was no coal, mum, when there was coal."—Boston Transcript.

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THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

(By Joel T. Berry.)

There is a sect of Christians called "The Peculiar People," who astonish and offend the Christians by their excessive faith in believing what the Bible tells them. Christian coroners and magistrates condemn and convict them for carrying out the precepts of Jesus, their Master, and James, his Apostle.

When they are ill, instead of sending for a physician to cure them, they call in Elders, according to the teaching of their Scriptures, who pray over the sick person, and anoint with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5:14), believing that the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. The promise is corroborated by the writer of Mark: "They shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover." (16:18).

Those who cannot believe in Bible promises, such as the late Charles Bradlaugh and others, are sent to prison, and those who do believe in it and try to act up to it, are also sent to prison, because they both have the honesty to say so.

Those who do not believe in them, but pretend to do so, condemn the two former, but what an illogical position these administrators of the law take up, for the promises or commands are either true or they are untrue. If they admit the latter, they indirectly condemn the very book on which their creed 's founded. By thus bringing the Holy Scriptures into ridicule or contempt (as the Blasphemy laws have it), these dispensers of the law are virtually guilty of blasphemy, and render themselves amenable to the Blasphemy Laws, under which Freethinkers have been persecuted and punished.

We cannot help admiring the honest logic of these poor, deluded people who place implicit faith in their Bible; but what can we think of those who, for respectability's sake, accept the Bible, with all its contradictions, impossibilities and atrocities, while secretly being non-believers, who one moment send people to prison for not believing in the Bible, and at another send people to prison for believing in it.

Wherein is the difference in the measurement of credulity in prayers for rain or fine weather, and prayers for the diseased or dying?

The first is called "faith," the other "credulity." But the difference is a difference without a distinction, which is an impossibility.

Do life insurance companies, in preparing their tables,, take into consideration the piety or prayerfulness of a district? And are these tables formed on an estimate of the prayers that are likely to go up to the "throne above," or on an estimate of the average longevity of lives? And would they not do so if it could be proved satiefactorily that prayer was really efficacious, and not a mere matter of feeling and sentiment? Is prayer for recovery from illness logical?

We hear from believers, who have perfect assurance and confidence in being what they term "saved", of the perpetual bliss and happiness reserved for them in Paradise. This being so, how is it that these same p ople have such a dread of illness, and fear of death? Why do they send for the physician immediately when they are ill, and request the prayers of their friends and of the congregation among whom they worship?—not, be it observed, that they may depart speedily for Paradise, but that they may recover and remain a little longer in what they call this "miserable wicked world."

We can only conclude that this world is not so distasteful, the bliss of Paradise so inviting and certain as orthodox believers, when they are in the enjoyment of sound health, would have us believe.

The efficacy of prayer is and must be a matter of opinion. To those who choose to spend a considerable portion of their lives in what may appear to rational people as useless praying—for we have seen that no communication can possibly take place between the natural and the supernatural, the scrutable and the inscrutable, the finite and the infinite. All we can say is, let them do so; no fair minded person would wish to deprive the illiterate of their little comfort. It is with a feeling more of sadness than of reproach that we turn away from such; and though their faithfulness to their opinions may be admired, it is impossible to look with the same equanimity upon the obstinate and culpable credulity of the more intelligent ones, who, mentally able to see and to reason, absolutely refuse to do either. But does it not appeal to the mind unfettered by the slavery of custom, that such a waste of valuable time is very shocking to contemplate, and especially so when we consider what might be learned concerning the truth of the various phenomena that are daily exhibited, which are now as so many dark places to the person of faith. Were that time devoted to the study of Science, and were these credulous persons who display such culpable ignorance in even the elementary science, told that they were guilty of similar superstitions to the savages in the heart of Africa, they would be as much astonished as we may be at their credulity.

The idea of incessant divine intervention, in opposition to the operation of unvarying law, will always be supported and encouraged by a priesehood, since it must desire to be considered as standing between the prayer of the votary and providential act.

"Astronomical predictions of all kinds," says Draper, "depend upon the admission of the fact that there never has been, and never will be, any intervention in the operation of natural laws. The scientific philosopher affirms that the world at any given moment is the direct result of its condition in the preceding moment and the direct cause of its condition in the subsequent moment. Law and Chance are only different names for mechanical necessity. Every event has its warrant in some preceding event and gives warrant to others that are to follow." Again, he says: "It has always been inexpedient to admit the prevalence of law of any kind as opposed to providential intervention. It was considered derogatory to the majesty of God that that will should be fettered in any way."

We are justified in expressing wonder and admiration, if not reverence, in contemplating the magnificence of the visible universe; the marvelous beauty and harmony of nature, and her grand and immutable laws, our own existence, and that of all other life by which we are surrounded. We are also justified in recognizing the existence of an inscrutable power behind all the phenomena that is manifested around us; but to attribute all this magnificent result of natural laws to a man-like deity, given to anger, cruelty and vindictiveness, —one god among a number of others, and jealous of the others, demanding worship in the form of cringing self-abasement, flattery and adulation—is to reduce humanity, in a manner, to the lowest species of animal life, and the human mind to a state of primitive cowardice and fear.

Such gross and ignorant notions, fostered through many centuries of priestcraft, have been the means of keeping men in darkness; have led them astray from the truth, and have delayed the progress and development of science and the advancement of knowledge.

With the disappearance of an anthropomorphous God, with human attributes, there disappears also not only lip worship, but divine worship of any sort. Mr. Herbert Spencer says that worship "is not mere lip-homage, but a homage expressed in actions; not a mere respect, but a respect proved by the sacrifice of time, thought and labor." Again, he says: "It is the neglect of science that is irreligious. *** It is the refusal to study the surround- the surrounding creation,—the universe and its cause, that is irreligious. Not only does mankind in general pass by without study these things which they daily proclaim to be so wonderful, but they frequently condemn as mere triflers those who give time to the observation of nature, and actually scorn those who show any active interest in these marvels. Devotion to science is a tacit worship—a tacit recognition of worth in the things studied, and by implication in their cause."

For a more concise view of this subject, see "First Principles," by Herbert Spencer, or "Evolution of Man," by Dr. Hardwisk.

SOCIETY NEEDS CIVILIZING.

The world is not yet civilized. The twilight of barbarism yet lingers and the spirit of savagery is still dominant. The war club has been exchanged for the police baton, and the spear is supplanted by the bayonet. But under the gilt and conventional cant of Things As They Are beats the heart of savagery, and the genius of the present social order is brutality and violence. This so-called Christian civilization is a duplex delusion, a sixteen-stringed humbug of mastodonic proportions, a scintillating sham sufficiently self-evident for a show-down. The present social order is propped by force and fraud and bulwarked by human stupidity. Society is turned upside down, and what should be on top is at the bottom and what should be at the bottom is on top.—Ross Winn.

HELL.

(By C. E. Johnson.)

Hell is a place where the Brunos, Paines and Ingersolls are confined for eternal punishment of hell-fire and brimstone, and the fated destiny of all other intellectual men and women who do not believe Bible bosh and ghost stories.

This tale of fickle superstition, born in the mind of ignorance, and rooted in the savage brain of primitive man, is like the story of Vulcan, the god of fire, who on his anvil forged the thunderbolts of the gods.

From below came sounds of a mighty hammer on a vast anvil, while from the mountain summit issued the black smoke and lurid glow of Vulcan's forge. They could not know and could not understand that this was a volcano, which came about as a natural cause, one of the grand and marvelous works of nature.

This is how hell came to exist in the mind of man—through the fear of some phenomena of nature that ignorant man could not understand.

Ignorance is the mother of superstition, and ignorance taught her children that deep down in the earth was a hell of fire and brimstone, whose fires never ceased burning, and that there is a devil at the door of this fiery furnace, who stands guard over this great vault of unquenchable fire for all time to come. Should you disobey the wishes of god, when your time comes to die, you will be transferred to the undying fires of Satan's hell, and there endure the long suffering of an eternity.

This superstition, which was born of Mother Ignorance, is one of the greatest curses that ever was instilled into the mind of illiterate and unthinking man.

Ah, Ignorance and Superstition, your death is fast approaching. Your struggles will soon be over, for I can see the torch of reason casting its intellectual rays of mental freedom over the whole world.

Herald the new day, the new era, the new civilization, for it is close at hand.

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Voltaire was the precursor of a new civilization. As much credit must be given him as any man in all history for the **permanent establishment of this great American Republic. There is scarcely any successful reform movement, among the many to the credit of the nineteenth century, which was not either originated or pioneered by Voltaire.**

Voltaire will always be regarded as the greatest man in literature, of modern times, and perhaps even of all times.
—GOETHE

Atheism and fanaticism are the two poles of a universe of confusion and horror. The narrow zone of virtue is between those two. March with a firm step in that path; believe in God and do good.
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PRIESTHOOD.

(Continued from Page 1).

priestly victims from twenty to fifty millions. This does not include the 100,000,000 who, Prof. Draper says, lost their lives by the twenty-years' war to recover Spain and Africa, brought on by the priesthood; nor does it include the lives uselessly lost in the 200 years of the Crusades, or those whose lives were given up in the 250 years of the strife between the Catholics and Protestants (Huguenots), where the priests exhibited equal cruelty to their opponents; nor does it include the extermination of the Albigenses, a powerful Christian sect, by the Catholics, or the slaughter of the English Catholics by the Episcopalians,, after the Pope's party had been driven from England.

In the long siege of some 1400 years from Constantine to the close of the seventeenth century, while the priesthood held the fort, about 200,000,000 of human beings were sacrificed by them to perpetuate their power in building up the church. Dissenting Christians, as well as Jews and other heretics, went down to death at the hands of the priesthood, who, as a general rule, forced the civil authorities to do the killing.

In the face of all this historical evidence, and much more that might be added, the priesthood, Catholic and Protestant, are ever babbling of the blessings of Christianity—a system whose priests slaughtered their millions and rejoiced over the prolonged suffering and terrible agony of their victims.

The priesthood, from the remotest antiquity to the present, has been the bane of the human race. The Christian priesthood, in particular, has at all times, in addition to its other crimes, been an enemy to progress, a stumbling block in the path of civilization, the opposer of every advanced thought, the destroyer of all useful books, and the opposer of every science—the great devilfish of the world, whose octopian arms everywhere have encircled its countless victims. Its claims of merit are standing lies to entrap the unwary; not a benefit has it ever conferred on mankind.

In addition to its other crimes, it has created an imaginary hell of eternal torments, as a means of forcing tribute from the weak-minded.

Lastly, it has erected numerous toll-gates along the great highway of life, where it stands sentinel, demanding tithes of the faithful, for which it promises a passport to the Elysian fields and an eternal home in heaven.

If the world will ever have peace and liberty, the priesthood must be exterminated, peacefully if possible, but totally annihilated. Introduce into the schools the bloody history of the priesthood from Constantine down to the close of the seventeenth century, and in a few years there would not be left a priest to tell the bell on the death of Christianity, whose fate, though prolonged for a time, is fixed by the inexorable decrees of evolution.

MRS. RICKER'S CANDIDACY.

(Dover (N. H.) Times.)

The prompt recognition of Mrs. Marillia Ricker's gubernatorial candidacy by The Times seems to afford the Republican managers of the state an easy way out of a serious difficulty. That trouble has been confronting them for some time has been sharply manifest. It is not that there are not still men enough in the party who are as well qualified as the average run of those whom they have been putting there for the last half century, but the difficulty is to find a man who wants or is willing to take the office or at least to run for it, upon whom both the stalwarts and half breeds, machinists and reformers, conservatives and progressives, regulars and insurgents can or will unite.

The Woodsville News names 18 men still left in the party, any one of whom it thinks fit for Governor, and hints that there are others not named; but it is unable to single out one upon whom it will guarantee an agreement by the rival camps, and the longer the selection is delayed the more doubtful the success of the man presented before the primaries when voting time comes. Neither the News nor any other Republican paper, or leader, can name a man upon whose success in the primaries as an aspirant for the Republican namination,—much less as a candidate before the people—it would dare stake a penny or a year's subscription. But this Mrs. Ricker candidacy, backed by The Times, puts an entirely different aspect upon the situation.

Marilla is a Republican, dyed in the wool, and, if not a yard wide, broad enough to stand squarely in her own boots and tie up with no faction. Any member of the Republican party can support her heartily and consistently, so far as politics may be concerned, though of course, she is not running on a partisan platform. She runs, of course, on a "Woman's Rights" platform, in vindication of the principles for which she has been contending for the last half century, or a considerable portion thereof at least; and on that platform, and in defense of these principles, machinist and insurgent can cheerfully unite. There has been no more decided advocate of Woman Suffrage in all these years than Senator Gallinger, the boss Republican machinist of the State. Governor Quinby himself is an ardent advocate of the cause. Remick and Burroughs and Benton and Churchill and Bass, of the reform army, are suffragists of the deepest dye. Llford, the great pacificator, has always been found on the side of the fair sex,, in their contention for equal rights. Here, then, is common ground for the whole crowd. Falling in behind The Times and training under the Ricker banner, their differences will be forgotten, and the day of discomfiture delayed if not avoided.

There is nothing in the Constitution or the statutes to preclude a woman from running for or holding any office in the state, from Governor down. Judge Doe once held that she could not be a notary public; but Judge Doe was a law unto himself. He has passed on, but Marilla Ricker still lives and is runing for Governor on her own merits. The chances are that she will get a following such as no male Republican, on an ordinary party platform, could command, Henry Robinson who has sulked in his tent, as it were, for some years past, will be in the forefront.

He will gird up his loins, take a hitch in his suspenders, pull down his vest, roll up his sleeves, turn down his collar, and sai in against all comers who dare antagonize the woman whose friend and admirer he has been, lo, these many years. And with Henry, there will rally a host of others who have found nothing to incite them to action in recent issues.

As for the Democrats, they will find no difficulty in rallying to the standard. Branch and Parker, of the Old Guard, and Hallis and Carr, of the new regime, have al aong been equal suffragists. They will fall into procession side by side with their former adversaries, as naturally as water runs down hill. There seems now to be no good reason why we should not make it unanimous for Marila, both at the primaries and at the general election, thus saving the Republicans from the threatened dilemma and insuring the state a governor who will do things. All that is wanted now to insure the complete success of the project is the approval and cooperation of Lysander Carroll and B. Frank Tucker, for which there is strong grounds for hope.

BIBLE.

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(Continued from Page 1.)

er: "He looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand." (Exo. 2-12.)

God was a great general in war. He directed his armies and disciplined his men in the feats of war.

"Blessed be the Lord, my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight." (Ps. 144-1.)

"Ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land, and dwell therein." (Num. 33-52, 53.)

I have mentioned only a few of the horrors and abominable teachings in this foul book—the foulest and most degrading in all literature. It creates demons, devils and courtesans of the famous red light districts and downtown slums. Every great crime or cruel wrong is sanctioned by this foul demon of literature, which is a disgrace to the bookshelves of our civilization.

It is a drawback to progress, a disgrace to morality, a viper which has for centuries preyed on the credulity of mankind.

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JAMES E. HUGHES, Lexington, Ky.

OBITUARY.

Mahala Pottle Ellsworth was born in Salem, Maine, Dec. 8th, 1836. Shew as the youngest of a family of eight children, all of whom have preceded her in death. She was united in marriage to Benj. Peabody on the 15th of March, 1857, at Freeman, Maine.

Mr. and Mrs. Peabody embarked for the West in November, 1863 and located on a farm near Utica, Minn. To this union seven children were born—four boys and three girls. One son, Amos, was killed by lightning in 1869, at the age of five years. Mr. and Mrs. Peabody moved to St. Charles, Minn., in 1894. About three years ago, Mrs. Peabody met with a painful accident, that has caused her many months of suffering. She never fully recovered her strength, but was a marvel of patience and fortitude to her friends and family all thru this ordeal.

Three years ago, the 15th of March, Mr. and Mrs. Peabody celebrated the 50th anniversary of their wedding day. It was an occasion which all who were present will long remember. Their home has been the scene of many festivities and family gatherings.

Those who have known Mrs. Peabody best will long cherish the memory of her many virtues, her kind words and loving deeds.

Even thru all her sufferings her greatest concern was for the comfort of those about her—her children, grandchildren and husband. She had a smile and a kind word for them all. Her life was one of unselfishness, honesty, integrity and true morality. She was a noble wife, a devoted mother and a sincere friend.

She passed away March 18th, 1910, and was buried at Utica, Minn. Rev. Hamrin, of the Methodist Church, assisted by Mrs. L. Patterson, conducted the services at the house and grave. The casket was loaded with beautiful flowers, gifts of relatives and friends. Miss Nona Caw sang beautifully, "Face to Face," and "Crossing the Bar,," and two selections were sung by a quartet.

* * * * * * * * * *

Once more we are brought face to face with that mystery which man calls death. Death is a monarch who reigns over all creatures that live upon the earth. We are born with death in us, and when our bodies are worn out, death snaps the silver cord and hushes our voice in silence.

Human life is mysteriously invested with laws, to violate which is to blow out the candle of our existence. The pale horse and his rider are no respecters of persons. They cut down the strong man who seems to be in possession of all his powers, the young maiden in the bloom and beauty of youth and the smiling babe in its mother's arms.

Those who understand and obey the laws of health may, for a time, if they have no inherited disease, escape the touch of this hand of death. But sooner or later the wintry frost nips the flower of life and we are gone forever.

As death is both natural and inevitable, it becomes us as rational beings to regard it calmly, and if by knowledge of and obedience to the laws of life, we may give our existence a free and full opportunity to run out its three score years and ten, we shall not be so reluctant to pass away.

In that mellow age, man sinks as tranquilly into the sleep of death as an infant falls asleep on its mother's breast. In youth we cling to life; we are terrified at the very thought of personal dissolution. This youthful tenacity of life is like the green apple which clings to the branch, and cannot be plucked from it, except by breaking the twig upon which it grows. Old age, on the other hand, has lost its strong attachment to life. It is like the ripe apple of autumn; you touch it gently and it drops freely into your hand. Death at a ripe old age is as natural and beneficent as birth was at the beginning.

It is quite natural for all thoughtful persons to try to lift the veil which hides the future from us. It is quite natural to have some opinions and theories; but at this point, where the wise men of all ages and all nations have been silent, it becomes us to be modest in our belief and charitable in our speech. But this we do know: There is some good in all. It is clearly the duty of every rational being to do as much good and as little evil as possible.

Let us then endeavor to cultivate a sympathy so true, a helpfulness so great, a charity so broad, that it may embrace humanity and crowd all evil from our hearts. Let us try to—

"So live that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan which moves
To that mysterious realm where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death—
Thou go not like the quarry slave at night,
Scourged and beaten to his dungeon; but sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."

* * * * * * * * *

The following poem was read at the funeral:

SHADOW.

———

Life was full of music in the happy past,
Now, with mist and darkness, are our skies o'ercast.
O, sweet summer ended; if we had but known
That, when leaves had fallen, we walk alone;
That the night was coming, and that we must part,
That the ties must sever, binding heart to heart,
Now, upon the border, we must stand alone.
O'er the deep, dark river those we love have gone,
Down into the billows stepped the weary feet,
Love is true and precious! Love is pure and sweet!
O, how could they leave it,—leave its earthly scene?
Leave their home forever, death's dark stream between?
Ties so close and tender wind about the heart,
Yet the dreaded summons forces us to part.
Clinging arms would hold them, Strive to draw them back,
For the stream is turbid, and the skies are black.
O, thou untried future, could our hearts but know
Of our loved ones' journey, when from us they go;
Could our hearts but fathom all the great unknown,
Into whose dim shadows they must walk alone.
But above the river droops the misty cloud,
Hiding them forever in a sable shroud.
Could our mortal vision pierce the mystery,
That so darkly shadows this uncertainty;
Could the veil that stretches like a mist between,
But for one brief moment let us view the scene;
All the strange, unthought-of, unknown things that be
In that region boundless—that Eternity.
But the misty shadow o'er the future lies,
And the sullen river mocks our streaming eyes.
Are they gone forever,—those we call our own?
Will they give no answer? Silence hath no tone.
Shall we never, never see their faces more
Till we cross the river to that far-off shore?
And if there we meet them, we will greet them how?
Will they be our own then, just as they are now?
Is our love eternal? If we could but know,
Tho' to part is bitter, we could let them go.
O, ye dreary shadows, how you hide the light!
Must we walk forever in a moonless night?
Still we call that question,—will you give no heed?
Will you never answer to the hearts that bleed?
O, the aching sorrows left within the breast!
O, the hopeless longing and the vague unrest!
We are sick and weary with our hopes and fears,
Sad as funeral marches seem the coming years.
Is there naught of comfort? Naught but sorrow's tear?
Is there naught to follow but the pall and bier?
When the clods shall rattle on the coffin's lid,
And the lifeless body from the light is hid,
Is there naught to follow? Must I still contend
With an empty shadow? If this is the end,
Why those vague aspirings for a purer life?
Thoughts of something better than this toil and strife?
Why not be contented with our living here?
Why forever longing for a higher sphere?
Why will hopeless yearning fill our hearts with gloom,
If our life is ended when we reach the tomb?
Is there not a future where we need not part,
Where the clinging tendrils twine around the heart?
Where the honest feelings will not end in pain?
Those we love the dearest will be ours again?
Parting is so bitter; Is there naught of sweet?
Is there not a home where we all shall meet?
Tell us of a future, so beautiful and grand,
Tell us we shall meet them in a better land.
Some sweet word of comfort kindly to us speak,
For our hearts are breaking, and our faith is weak.
If there is a future fraught with joys more pure,
The great pain of parting will the bliss obscure.
Days will pass so slowly, 'tis so very far
To that land eternal, where our loved ones are;
Yet the pain and anguish we could better bear
If we knew that sometime we should meet them there.
O, the hardest lessons conned thru the weary years,
Lessons not completely learned e'en thru our smiles and tears.
We are vainly groping for the golden chain
That, with scarce a warning, death has rent in twain...
O, the links thus broken, time will not restore;
Will the tie thus severed part us evermore?
Must we plead forever? Is there none can tell
Of that mystic region where our loved ones dwell?
Is there any future? Must we ask in vain?
Will we in the future meet our own again?
O, the doubts and shadows that around us fall,
Shroud our gloomy spirits in a sable pall.
Is our love eternal? If we could but know,
ho' to part is bitter, we could let them go.

———

It is more important to raise the living than to raise the dead, to bring up the baby than to pull up Lazarus.—Truthseeker.

Whatever may be God's future, there will still remain his past. If the lives whom in the ftutre he is to bless are to be witnesses to his divine goodness, the lives whom in the past he has blighted will be still crying to him out of the ground; and, since the theist maintains that he is the same yesterday, today and forever, the hand which is red with the millions of years of murder will never cease to incardine all the seas of eternity.—W. H. Mallock.

DOG FENNEL

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